

Æneas escapes from a burning house carrying on his back his father Anchises and leading Ascanius by the hand. On the right, the part shown in the Perry picture, are figures bringing water to extinguish the flames.

The Miraculous Draught of Fishes is one of the ten cartoons designed by Raphael for tapestry. The seven existing originals are now in the South Kensington Museum. The painter illustrates the moment when St. Peter, falling at Jesus's feet, exclaims, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." In strong contrast with the agony and distress of the two foremost figures and the strenuous exertion shown by the attitude of the disciples in the second boat, is the serenity of Christ and the calm and peace of the scene, the still green water reflecting like a mirror the boats and their occupants, the deep blue sky, and the deeper green of the little village on the shore of the lake. The blue haze which envelops the whole suggests an early summer dawn.

The Deliverance of St. Peter is again a fresco in the Vatican. The picture consists of three parts. In the centre, St. Peter lies in prison, chained to two guards, who lean against the walls evidently overcome by sleep. The angel appears in a blaze of glory, and touches the saint, who is in the act of waking. In the scene on the right, the angel leads St. Peter out of the prison, down a flight of steps where the guards lie in their armour, sleeping heavily. The apostle walks as if in a trance—"He went out," says the Bible narrative, "as in a dream." On the left is seen the consternation of the guards, who awake to find the prisoned escaped. The darkness is relieved by a torch held by one of the soldiers and by the dim light of the half-moon scudding through the clouds. The general effect of the whole is very dark, and the colours are almost indistinguishable.

THE CHILDREN'S COUNTRY HOLIDAY FUND.

I have again had the pleasure of reading the letters of some of the children who have spent part of their summer holiday in the country. I read 744 letters from children in the sixth standard; they were almost without exception beautifully written and were on the whole very natural in style. There were a few boys who wrote as the Schoolmaster in "The Mother" talked. Not much is told of the journey, as they were children from ten to thirteen years old, and they had probably had a good day's work before they started. Some of the girls took "little ones" with them, and in one letter telling of a day's doing in the country the constant chorus was "then we tidied the little ones." "I kept on thinking what my lady would be like." I did not read a single letter in which any complaints were made of "my lady." The lady's husband was in many cases called "the gentleman at our house." The children's own words will show the kind of people they were fortunate enough to meet:—

"I went to H—— in the care of motherly women and the head ladyship."

"I must now turn your thoughts to the lady's kindness; she let us take it in turns to pour out the tea and be 'Mother.'"

"I had a splendid lady, and her daughters were most ladylike."

"When we got there it was late, but I held the candle while my lady picked us a few raspberries; we then went to bed. When our lady came to bed she gave us some cocoa and a bun, which was lovely."

"I must needs say I am very thankful for having a kind lady."

It is very striking to notice again how sad and lonesome single sounds make the children, especially the boys. It may be that, having been brought up in the hum and incessant mixed noises of a great city, their ears miss it and wait for it, and then a single sound strikes them, and it is something so unusual as to give an uncanny feeling. "We had very little wind, but the tunes of it were dreadful to hear." "One morning I woke early; to hear the clock strike five made me miserable."

Little remarks that are made let in sidelight on the children's homes.

"When we went to bed we were able to sleep in the dark, which we liked very much."

"The people in the country are very good-natured, you do not hear them quarrel."

"Country folk food is more plain and common than the food of Londoners, the reason is simple enough, for country people are generally poor and hard working people, the reverse of some of the luxuriant Londoners."

"The country is so nice and refreshing, but London is like a place where they smoke haddocks."

"Where people have no wall-papers it is comical, but more healthy."

"Farmers are very industrious men, and do like work, and are not like some of the men in London who will not work for their living."

The Nature Notes in these letters are quite admirable. The majority of the children are careful to answer the questions Mrs. Barnett asks in the letter they all receive before going into the country. The letter says sheep never graze near a rabbit hole. "I wonder why?" Here are some of the reasons given: "Because it smells too nasty"; "For fear the rabbit should jump up and bite their nose"; "Because there is no grass there"; "Because the rabbits have eaten the grass."

The children are asked "What is the other name for Poor Man's Weather Glass?" The answers are: "Scarlet Pimpernel"; "Mother Pimpernel"; "Mother Pimps." Here is a truly remarkable answer: "All along the sides of the fields Poor Man's Weather Glass was to be seen. I could not find another name for it, so I formed my opinion that it was sold in chemists with a little booklet attached containing hints for the complexion." There seems to be a curious superstition about gathering the flowers of the *Umbelliferae*. At home we children called them all "kecks." These children more commonly called them "Mother die," or "Break-your-mother's-heart."

The berries of the wild arum are called snake's food, and "if you gather them a snake will come out and bite you."

A popular name for wild pansy is "Garden-gate."

Here are two good notes about a dragon fly: "Once when I was out I noticed a creature with a long slender body among the reeds and rushes. The colour was dark blue, and I think according to your nice letter it was a dragon fly."

"The dragon fly had silvery wings, with those nice colours as if you spilled oil with water."

The following is, I think, an admirable letter:

"Dear Madam,—While I was in the country I picked up a funny crooked twig on the end of which was growing a bud which was covered with sticky stuff. Dear Madam, could you tell me why that stuff is only on the bud and not on the branch or down the trunk of a tree. Honoured Madam, will you answer this question, why is it the country people talk different to the London people? The country people would not think of saying the word 'fool' the same as we Londoners do, but they would make the word sound longer and broader. Why should the country people say 'Suffold' when the word was 'Southwold?'"

This little bunch of quotations I have gathered from the letters I thought were interesting and quaint:

"A cow does not look peaceful when anyone has been catching it."

"Forests are the most populous places for trees."

"The bee was very tryful in getting a piece out of a rose-leaf."

"We went out to tea and saw the cows. The cow had two little calves, and the gentleman a phonograph."

"The violet held its head very drearily."

"The grass were in some places toddly, and in some parts cut short; on the cricket pitch it was nearly everyday ground."

"I sighted a rainbow of beauty."

"The drones do nothing but stroll about."

"Pigs are the dirtiest animals but the cleanest meat. It is a type of the duck."

"The railings round fields are to protect those from going in who do not want to."

These are two pretty fancies from girls:

"As I looked at the flowers in my lady's garden I looked at their performances. I thought I was in a large ball-room where beautiful gaily-coloured ladies were dancing, while the soft breeze was gently fanning their gay complexions."

"We went to pick flowers who seemed to be more fresh on the idea of being taken away to be shown to anyone and to be admired."

A party of boys had this delightful plan:

"We used to pick bunches of wild flowers and take them to a stream and make a pot out of stones. We made a pot by putting them in the shape of a square box; then we put the flowers in. The flowers would always have fresh water because of the running water."

Nearly every letter expresses gratitude for the beautiful holiday, and many children regret that Mrs. Barnett was not with them "to enjoy what we saw and heard."

The children's own words can best express my sentiments:

"The writing of this letter has given me much joy and pleasure to think about the country, and the beautiful things I saw and heard there."

"I wish to close this letter with confidence."

"I have no more to tell you, hoping that you will appreciate these few lines which I know you will."

HARRIET SMEETON.

VOLCANOES.

Two main types of great volcanic eruptions may be distinguished—the explosive and the effusive. In the former the activity is very violent but brief, while the latter is characterised by the emission of floods of lava. There is a theory that between solar and seismic disturbances exists a more or less close connection.

Sunspots are merely evidences of volcanic action in the sun on a gigantic scale, during which matter is ejected with such tremendous force and in such quantities as to permeate space, the electric elements causing seismic disturbances, and sometimes even interfering with our telegraphic and telephonic systems.

There are at present some three hundred active volcanoes, a small number compared with those now extinct—not a question of hundreds, but of tens of thousands. By far the greater number of volcanoes stand near the sea, and a great ring of them encircle the Pacific. At a depth of a few miles in the earth's crust great masses of rock exist at a very high temperature, and under great pressure. They contain much vapour ready to expand when the pressure is relieved. Escape tends to take place along the line of least resistance, and Nature has provided safety valves in the form of volcanoes.

Vesuvius is the oldest known active volcano, and it is curious to note the difference in effect between its great

eruption and that of Mount Pelée. Parts of Pompeii and Herculaneum are to-day in an excellent state of preservation. St. Pierre was completely swept away six years ago in the space of a few minutes.

An example of explosive volcanoes is Krakatoa, an island between Java and Sumatra. In 1883, after two centuries of repose, it again became active. A terrific explosion took place, and the ashes were projected into the air to such a height that the finest dust was carried all round the world for months afterwards, and occasioned brilliant sunset effects. The year 1902 was a memorable one as regards seismic disturbances. The list includes such eruptions as took place in the Caucasus, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Mexico, and Martinique, causing the loss of at least one hundred and thirty thousand lives. It is remarkable to note the reappearance of sunspots in that year.

At St. Pierre (Martinique) forty thousand people lost their lives in the morning of Ascension Day, 1902. Those on board the ships lying in the harbour saw a devastating cloud utterly wipe out the beautiful native town of Josephine Beauharnais in less time than it takes to tell. Thick darkness fell, and the decks and rigging of the ships became so hot owing to the ashes that the sailors sought refuge in the sea, only to be scalded to death.

There are very evident signs of repeated volcanic activity in bygone times in Britain, and the sheets of basalt found in the Giant's Causeway, belonging to the same system of volcanic centre, are also found in Iceland, whose volcano, Hecla, is usually considered to be Britain's safety valve.

D.

JOTTINGS ON THE N.U.W.W. CONFERENCE AT ABERDEEN.

A SHORT time ago I spent a stimulating few days at the conference of the National Union of Women Workers, and had the privilege of meeting and listening to women engaged

in almost every department of work. The N.U.W.W. is a large society, comprising forty-two branches, and over seventy societies were represented at the conference, so that the discussions embraced many points of view. All the papers bore on the "Training and Practice of Citizenship," and we heard papers on the Historical Position of Women (from the President, Mrs. Grey); on Training Boys and Girls in the Home and at School; Some of the ways in which Women can Help the State; on Women in India (from Miss Vera Saunders and Mrs. F. A. Steel); and on the International Council of Women (of which the Countess of Aberdeen is president). We thus widened our horizon from the "home to the world," as Mrs. Creighton said, and ended the meetings with a beautiful address on the "Obligation and Benefit of Work," from Miss Lumsden.

That women are terribly hampered in the practice of citizenship, and quite as much in training for the service of the State by being denied the Parliamentary vote—the insignia of citizenship—was felt keenly by all. Full citizenship, which is only possible through the Franchise, is desired and demanded by women, not only for its privileges, but still more—to quote Mrs. Creighton again—for its "duties and responsibilities." This is surely a subject of general interest, and in which apathy may do much harm. It seems a pity that energy should so often be spent in discussing different methods for obtaining the vote that might be used in considering the real point at issue. There are so many societies for Women's Suffrage that surely each person could find one whose methods appeal to her.

However, by taking part in the work permitted them, we were shown that women could do much good service, although their opinions, even of those with widest experience, do not carry the weight they merit.

P.N.E.U. methods in teaching citizenship in the home were described on the first morning, and the very general and sincere interest shown in our work was most encouraging.

I can only give one or two points from a few of the papers I heard, but the Conference Report, which gives all the speeches, can be obtained (price 1s.) from the N.U.W.W. Secretary, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, W.

We heard of an interesting scheme which has been started with good results at Oldham (by no means a beautiful city), the aim of which is to lead the children of the Elementary Schools to "idealise" their native town or village. It is hoped thus to do a little to counteract the tendency for the life of the country to become too much centred in London, because the working boy or girl thinks his home so dull. A band was formed of children from different schools in the town, who were to try to make their city as beautiful as they could. All who wished might join, and the members wore badges. They tried to achieve great things by small means. For instance, the members planted flowers in their windows for the impersonal reason that this would make the houses more cheerful from the outside; they undertook not to leave paper, etc., about, and in all ways to keep the streets as seemly as possible. It was suggested that some lady might occasionally visit the schools in her district in order to interest the children in the history and buildings of their city.

Might not it be possible for the richer children to join this "band" also, and thus to help their less fortunate neighbours without the danger of becoming "patronising"? Presents of bulbs or seeds, occasional visits to places of interest, geography walks, the acting of scenes from local history, to which the poorer neighbours were invited, might give valuable opportunities for sharing interests and pleasures.

A useful suggestion was made by a speaker who advised that children should be told to whom they owe the stories they have learned to love. Many of our favourite fairy tales are borrowed from the Danish and German, and it was thought if this debt were acknowledged with gratitude an

attitude of insular pride and prejudice towards other countries might be less common.

It seemed to be the general opinion that citizenship should be taught to the elder pupils in schools through definite lessons in elementary civics and economics, besides indirectly. Girls should know some of the conditions of labour; for instance, that the production of "cheap" goods often entails sweating, and that if they spend much time in a shop without buying they may cost other girls their situations.

Alexandra College, Dublin, has a strong guild comprising Past and Present students, with a membership of 800. These attend lectures on industrial subjects, and are encouraged to carry theories into practice. They have purchased seven tenement houses, worked on Miss Octavia Hill's lines, with "libraries, playrooms, old clothes shops, singing and sewing classes." The tenants have occasional treats, and are given presents of flowers and fruits. These are brought to the College by girls once a week, and taken round by the voluntary rent collectors. In addition to these activities, the Guild has established eighteen annuities of £26 for old ladies. Each old lady has a visitor allotted to her, a girl who goes and sees her and tries to be her friend, and to look after her if she is ill, and to provide her with nourishment and medicine." They have also a factory girls' club, and a country holiday fund for children from the tenement houses and girls' club.

An interesting afternoon was spent in listening to papers on how to combat the physical deterioration of the race. Every country is trying to solve this problem for itself, but the best hope lies in their combined activity. The recent International Medical Congresses are steps in the right direction, but what is needed is a "great International Health Army," comprising the medical profession, the legislative authorities, and the general public, and in which every member has his allotted duties. We heard how epidemics

had been stamped out by the united efforts of every member of a town.

At the instigation of the Women's National Health Association in Ireland, founded a year ago by Lady Aberdeen, the Anti-Tuberculosis Campaign was started. The splendid work that has already been done towards lessening the devastations of this terrible scourge, earned for this society a prize of £100 at the International Tuberculosis Congress at Washington. The society works under the direction of a medical committee, and what success they have achieved is due to the ready co-operation of all classes—administrative, professional, and voluntary—in the great fight, over seventy local branches having been formed. The methods of warfare are many and varied. Educational work is being done by means of a travelling tuberculosis exhibition, in connection with which lectures are given. The exhibition has already visited over seventy districts in Ireland, and so many flock to the lectures that hundreds have to be refused admittance. Preventive work is an important feature of the society, which tries to better the general physical condition of the people by securing fresh air, pure milk, etc., and preventing the spread of the disease by infection. The amelioration of the condition of the sufferers is also the work of the W.N.H.A., who erect sanatoria, arrange for treating patients in their own homes, district nurses, etc.,

This, and similar organisations, have been established to fight against special diseases. The health societies endeavour to improve the general physical condition of the race, to lessen infant mortality, and to get cleaner and better homes for the people. The members are voluntary health visitors, who work systematically and efficiently under the direction of the medical officer, and in close touch with the various local authorities. These workers pay friendly visits to different houses in order to give advice on health, to help patients to carry out the doctor's instructions, to report to the doctor on the home environment, etc. The health visitor needs

great tact, keen insight into character, a knowledge of the circumstances of those she visits, of the laws and bye-laws which may affect them, of practical domestic hygiene, sanitation, etc.

Some of the best work is done in connection with the children, although the efforts of the society are not confined to them. The health visitor is able to give real, sympathetic help and advice to the mother in the care of herself and children. The visits are continued all through a child's life, and do not stop at any special age. The health visitor comes into touch with many other societies, and should work with them and give what help she can. Her record of a child's health from birth till school age, for instance, should be of great use. The work, however, can only be successful if the health visitor can become the friend of those she visits.

Space forbids a detailed account of the other kinds of work for women of which we heard.

Clubs for working girls offer a particularly wide scope for the social worker, and give opportunities for doing good work in many directions.

We heard of the work that women can do on county and borough councils, on urban councils, as Poor-law guardians, on charity committees, etc. Their help is especially needed for all matters which concern women and children, sanitation, hospital management, the management of workhouses, the prison treatment of women, education, and in many other branches of municipal government.

Women were particularly urged to take an interest in these somewhat unattractive subjects, to give their services if they can, but at least for those who are entitled to the vote to use it.

I have written somewhat at length because the subjects interested me profoundly, and they may perhaps interest one or two others.

M. E. F.